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PARK COUNCIL NEWS

VOL. 71 NO. 1 JANUARY 1971

Newsletter of the Contra Costa Park Council, P.O. Box 4322, Walnut Creek, Calif., 94596
Editor: Patrick Whittle, 176 Waterman Circle, Danville, Calif., 94526, Telephone 837-3478
Artwork and Printing: Goldenberg, 727 Main St., Martinez, Calif., 94553, Telephone 228-1677

Waldie to Address Joint Meeting

Congressman Jerome Waldie will be featured speaker at a joint Park Council and Sierra Club Central Contra Costa Conservation Committee meeting on January 14. One of the most outstanding conservationists in Congress, Waldie will discuss past accomplishments and future prospects of national environmental legislation.

The meeting will start, as usual, at 7:45 p.m. in the meeting room of the Concord Public Library at 2900 Salvio Street, Concord. A question-and- answer period will follow, and light refreshments will be served.

Don't miss this important meeting. Mark your calendar right away! January 14, 7:45 p.m., Concord Public Library.

SUPERVISORS TOSS OUT PARK DEDICATION ORDINANCE

Contra Costa Board of Supervisors has now given its long-awaited decision on the proposed county park dedication ordinance, which would oblige subdivision developers to dedicate land for parks and recreation. After two years of study, review, and postponements, the Board decision was to reject the proposal and refer the matter to a new Board committee for further study and review.

Only one supervisor voted in favor of the ordinance: James E. Moriarty, who made the motion for adoption. None of his fellow-supervisors seconded the motion. According to a report by Bruce Henderson in The Independent, Valley Community Services District director Ann Jolley said, "I feel ill." She added, "It's easy to make generalizations like 'I'm in favor of motherhood.' It takes more courage and honesty to come out and do something."

The ordinance proposal was initiated by VCSD two years ago, with the encouragement of the Park Council and other groups. It has been successfully opposed by the Association of Home Builders of Contra Costa County.

A THOUGHT FROM THE PARK COUNCIL PRESIDENT

Recently, I read a book entitled "The diligent Destroyers" (Ballantine-Audobon paperback, $1.25) which is essential reading for every conservation-minded person. It is factual material about the part played by the Army Corps of Engineers, the Bureau of Reclamation, and the highway engineers in destroying our portion of this planet.

The book is fair. Much of what has been done is unquestionably good and necessary, but most of the really vital projects are now completed. This leaves the marginal and unnecessary projects, but in true bureaucratic style these are attacked with undiminished zeal. And each and every project diminishes and demeans our surroundings in some way. We inherited great beauty but turn it into unlovely concrete and asphalt.

The book stresses the unholy alliance between the agencies and the pork barreling politicians who feel that their constituents will judge them by what they get for the District rather than on their far-sighted conservation efforts. It is also pointed out that the omnibus bill containing all these pork barrel items goes to the President as a package that must be accepted or rejected in its entirety. This fact largely destroys any opportunity for the President to weed out the worst of the unneeded environment-destroying portions. (The Congress could do this if there were any sincerity in its concern for the environment.) Give the President veto power over individual portions of the omnibus bill!

The Contra Costa Park Council, formerly the Contra Costa Park and Recreation Council, is a non-profit organization incorporated under the laws of the State of California. The Park Council is dedicated to fostering the natural beauty of the county, preserving open space, and providing adequate opportunity for healthful recreation. Contributions are tax-deductible.
President: Alvin A. Burton, 151 Cafeto Court, Walnut Creek, California, 94598, Telephone 934-5716.

There is also reason to question the integrity of spending the public money on projects with a benefit-cost ratio only slightly over one, but basing calculations on a laughable 3.5 percent interest rate and a fifty-year payout period. Can we really look into the future more than 20-30 years at the most?

What is most desperately needed is some factor in the engineering equations to evaluate the natural beauty that will be destroyed by the project. Even though it is hard to put a monetary value on these esthetic values, they cannot forever be ignored. What we must have, and soon, is an ombudsman for the land. At all levels of government, there must be an agency with veto power over all unneeded environment-destroying schemes-an agency that will recalculate benefit costs with honest interest rates and that will plug into the equation losses of beauty and naturalness. Such an agency must be above politics, and it must be given the power to say NO, absolutely NO.

----Al Burton

HOW ABOUT A REGIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL AGENCY?

Planners, conservation groups, and business organizations have been meeting to draft a bill for protection of the Bay Area environment. The bill is expected to be introduced at the new legislature, probably by Assemblyman John Knox.

A Regional Environmental Agency would be an umbrella over the existing commissions that have been authorized by the legislative: that is, BCDC, the Air Pollution Control Board, and the Metropolitan Transportation Agency. Two new commissions would be established: Solid Waste Disposal and Open Space. The Open Space Commission would cover most provisions of last summer's unsuccessful SB 1400, which was defeated by only one vote in the Finance Committee.

Over the past 3 years, three distinguished groups have made important and independent studies of the Bay Area regional government. These are the Bay Area League of Women Voters, the Palo Alto branch of the American Association of University Women, and the Bay Area Council, which was authorized by the California legislature. Their plans are remarkably similar, all calling for a strong, flexible, multipurpose elected Regional Board containing the above commissions.

Not one of the plans calls for a metropolitan government or a merger of all existing governments. Only area-wide functions would come under the control of the Regional Board.

Some important groups oppose the concept of regional government, and the legislature has not been warm to the idea. However, both the Bay Area League of Women Voters and the AAUW, who have taken samples of public opinion, maintain that the people of the Bay Area are way ahead of the legislature in pressing for stricter controls. How about it, people?

----Susan Watson

EBMUD PRESIDENT RESIGNS

William D. McNevin, president of the Board of Directors of the East Bay Municipal Utility District for the past five years, resigned as a director at the board meeting Tuesday, Dec. 22. McNevin became a director in November, 1947, and was elected president in 1965. He has served longer than any other person in the 47-year history of EBMUD except incumbent Director A.C. Carrington of Alameda. Carrington took office six months before McNevin.

The retiring Director, who represents Ward 1 in the northern part of the Utility District, is giving up his seat because he is moving out of his ward from Lafayette into Oakland. His resignation is effective Monday, Jan. 4. The Municipal Utility District Act provides for appointment of a successor by the remaining members of the board, or by the Governor if no replacement is made within 60 days. Board vice-president DeWitt W. Krueger said the directors hoped to appoint a replacement in January.

ACCENT ON SHIP CHANNEL

Ecological aspects of the proposed 78-mile, $65 million John F. Baldwin San Francisco to Stockton Ship Channel are under study by ACCENT, the Advisory Committee on the Conservation of the Environment in Navigation and Transportation. Permanent chairman is Stockton attorney Tom Zuckerman, who represents the Save the Delta Association. Vice-chairman is Will Siri, past president of the Sierra Club and currently chairman of the Save San Francisco Bay Association.

ACCENT comprises a wide variety of interests ranging from shipping and heavy industry to conservation groups. It recently appointed a special subcommittee to study an "environmental statement" required for the project by the Environmental Protection Act of 1969. Such a statement is an attempt to solve ecological problems before they occur in massive developments like the Baldwin Channel project. (Acknowledgements to The Sun, December 18, 1970.)

Blacktop Bites the Dust

Bucking the trend toward wider, paved roads, EBRPD crews are cutting back and narrowing Redwood Regional Park fire trails (which double for recreational use) to enhance the environment. They have also sown some 1200 pounds of grass seed and 100 pounds of wildflower seed, much of it collected by hand, along the bare shoulders of the East Ridge Trail.

Bob Savattone, EBRPD Parks Department chief, said, that, in addition, park workmen under the direction of Park supervisor Greg Phillips and foreman Gary Pickering have created a novel 2000-gallon "watering hole" near the trail to help wildlife in the area. "We estimate that wildlife has increased 50 percent in the vicinity of the watering hole," Savattone observed.

Fire trails in some places had gradually widened to between 25 and 40 feet. These were cut back to a maximum width of 12 feet by scraping dirt back onto the trail. Wildflower sown by hand and raked in along the trail shoulders, include red and yellow columbine, farewell-to-spring, shooting star, pink buckwheat, purple fireweed, nine varieties of California poppy, tidy tips, blue and white lupine, blue bonnet, buffalo eyes, St. Catherine's lace, five kinds of larkspur, and native sunflower.

"We consider this project to be a happy blending of practicality, beauty, and restoring the natural environment," Savattone said. "There is no reason at all why our fire equipment will be any less efficient because it travels over a flower-lined trail than if it moved over a sterile, flowerless road."

Bart Billboard Plans Come Under Attack

The Park Council endorses the following call for action, made in a joint communication from the California Roadside Council and the Orinda Association:

A number of East Bay and San Francisco people have realized recently that the Directors of BART intend to short-change us in one important respect. They promised us, along with good transportation, a beautiful system with stations designed to be visual assets to our cities. Now, to our consternation, BART discloses its plan to lease station and right-of-way space for regular commercial advertising--billboards, for example!

The California Roadside Council and the Orinda Association have carefully considered BART's plan for in-train placards, parking lot electrified kiosks, and outsized billboards at BART stations. They have listened carefully to public relations presentations on the subject of advertising in the BART system. Having done this, they have concluded that the whole concept of commercial advertising within the BART system is ill-advised, if not intolerable.

Most offensive and perhaps least defensible are billboards between the tracks and those on the exterior of above-ground stations, running the length of the platforms. The latter flaunt their advantage where cities prohibit billboards adjacent to BART lines and stations. Communities are doing their part by giving up the tax benefits of prime location billboard advertising adjacent to BART lines and stations, for the sake of keeping visual quality high. It is unthinkable that BART should take advantage of these communities by exploiting its advantage in a monopoly of advertising.

What can be done? Senator Nejedly and Assemblyman Knox have publicly stated their displeasure with BART's advertising program. They have promised to meet with us and the Directors of BART in an attempt to persuade them to abandon their advertising policy. If this effort fails, they will introduce appropriate legislation.

We ask that you do the following:

1. Join the unified campaign being organized by the California Roadside Council and the Orinda Association. Do this by writing a note along these lines: "I (We) object to BART's present plan to lease station, coach, and right-of-way space for commercial advertising, and will join the unified effort against this plan." Send the note to Mrs. Eugene V. Garbarino, 8 Camino Lenada, Orinda, Calif. 94563. Alternatively, call Mrs. Garbarino at 254-3111.

2. Write to Senator John A. Nejedly and Assemblyman John T. Knox, urging each of them to help prevent the use of BART as a field for commercial advertising. Your letters can be brief; they are simply to indicate citizen interest. Each can be addressed to State Capitol, Sacramento, Calif. 94814

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

January 14 Thursday, 7:45 p.m. PROGRAM MEETING Park Council and Sierra Club. Congressman Jerome Waldie speaks on past accomplishments and future prospects of national environmental legislation. Concord Public Library, 2900 Salvio Street, Concord. Everyone welcome.

January 28 Thursday, 7:30 p.m. ENVIRONMENTAL FORUM co-sponsored by Berkeley Adult School and Berkeley Branch of A.A.U.W. Harold Gilliam, Ray Balter, and Fred Tamke discuss "Mass Media Influence on Environmental Action." No fee for audit. No charge for students or senior citizens. College Women's Club, 2680 Bancroft Way, Berkeley.

February 11 Thursday, 7:30 p.m. ENVIRONMENTAL FORUM, "Government Agencies Conservation Practices." (See Jan. 28.)

February 25 Thursday, 7:30 p.m. ENVIRONMENTAL FORUM, "Environmental Action Programs." (See Jan. 28.)

Boosterism is dying in Arizona. Meeting at the Grand Canyon, an ad hoc group of 96 leading citizens called "Town Hall" voted surprisingly to stop spending public funds to attract new industry and residents to the state. Reason: a surfeit of success. While Arizona's 20 year boom has brought immediate economic benefits, it is also impairing the state's natural beauty and resources. Though it has no official power, the group wants to conserve the state for future inhabitants. Urging more government attention to the environment, it recommends specific bans on billboards, nonreturnable bottles and detergents that do not break down in nature. As Town Hall sees it, Arizonans must heed the lesson that rampant growth is not synonymous with progress.

(From the "Environment" section of Time magazine issue of November 9, 1970.)

SCOUTS DO GREAT JOB OF MAPPING

While other youngsters, perhaps, fritter away their time in idle weekend pursuits, three San Leandro Boy Scouts, working for Eagle Scout rank, have completed a two-month project of surveying Coyote Hills Regional Park marshlands. The three, all holding Life Scout rank in Troop 555, are Steve Palmeri, 13, Jeff King, 16, and Jeff's brother, Gary 14. Supervised by their fathers, they mapped about 150 acres of marshlands on a scale of one inch to 100 feet. Their efforts mean that now, for the first time, EBRPD has detailed maps of the area.

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FEB. 4 PROGRAM MEETING TO COVER THE WATER FRONT

The relentless pressures of urbanization and development in our watershed bring increased run-off and flood damage to streams and property alike. To what extent should we alleviate these problems with stream channelization and dam construction? Should we build reservoirs on Upper Sycamore and Bolinger Creeks? Clear out and channelize Grayson, Pine, Las Trampas, and San Ramon Creeks? Do we do both, or neither? Are there other answers? What about the ecological destruction which results from such large-scale projects?

These and other related questions are matters of vital concern not only to every local resident interested in his environment, but to every local resident, period. The Army Corps of Engineers and the County Flood Control District have begun investigation into the matter of flood control in this watershed, and their ultimate findings and actions will affect each of us. If you would like to learn more about their plans for flood control, plan to attend the Feb. 4 Program Meeting, which will be devoted to a four-member panel discussion on the subject. The audience will have the opportunity to question the panel members following the debate.

Speaking for future flood control measures will be Mr. Carlyle Rich, Chief Engineer for the Contra Costa County Flood Control District, and Mr. George Waddell, Chief of the Engineering Division, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Sacramento District. Protagonists for the conservationists will be Mr. Robert Canning, Chairman of the Walnut Creek Basin Flood Control Committee of the Sierra Club's Central Contra Costa Conservation Committee, and Mr. Joe Ulmer, biology instructor at the Las Lomas High School in Walnut Creek.

Remember, this is a matter of crucial importance to all of us, so mark your calendars:

Date: February 4 (Thursday)
Time: 7:45 p.m.
Place: Meeting Room of the Concord Public Library
Location: 2900 Salvio Street, Concord

----Manny Lindner
Program Chairman

P.S. Light refreshments also.

SANE Contests For Las Trampas

Save America's Natural Environment (SANE)--a Contra Costa County youth group composed of students ranging in age from elementary to high school level--is sponsoring two contests in aid of an expanded Las Trampas wilderness park. Man and Nature is the general theme of the photographic contest and the ecology exhibit contest. It is suggested that the work be related to the wilderness park proposal, but entries dealing with man and his relationship with nature, historical or future, positive or negative, will be gladly accepted.

The photography contest will offer five areas of competition: (1) color slides, (2) black and white prints, (3) color prints, (4) motion picture film, and (5) open area (for example, a mixed-media presentation consisting of some photographic work accompanied by written essay, sound track, or narration). For areas 1, 2, and 3, there is a limit of two entries per person; for areas 4 and 5, there is a limit of one entry per person. All work submitted will be used for public display in the community.

Entries in the ecology exhibit contest may be two-or-three-dimensional. They may make use of any media and be accompanied by recorded sound, such as narration or poetry. The only limitation is size: (1) height may not exceed 4 ft., (2) length may not exceed 8 ft., and (3) width may not exceed 3 ft. Ecology exhibits will be used for public display in the community.

Already under way, the contests will run through March 31, 1971. Various prizes and awards will be given to the contestants whose work is judged best in each class. Although SANE is especially encouraging students to enter, the contest is open to all interested people. Call these officials for more details:

PHOTOGRAPHIC CONTEST

Barry Cole - 284-5587
Ken Duckert - 687-1933

ECOLOGY EXHIBIT

Mike Peckham - 939-2897
Jean Mormon - 686-5633
Mrs. Jane Helrich - 687-8873

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WALDIE REVIEWS ECOLOGY SCENE

"Some of you have heard Mr. Waldie speak. Others have not. Some who have never heard him speak are looking forward to it." Congressman Jerome Waldie related this recent, hilarious introduction in opening his address on January 14 to a combined Park Council and Sierra Club meeting at the Concord Civic Center.

A capacity crowd of about 300 people, including as many under-thirties as over-thirties, gave Contra Costa's fighting conservationist congressman an enthusuastic reception.

The main ecological problem facing the new Congress, in Waldie's view, is the SST. (Lobbyists for the aerospace industry proclaim the great benefits of the supersonic transport, while opponents rail against its sonic booms and the danger of irreversible climatic changes due to its pollution of the upper atmosphere.)

The key to defeating the SST project, according to Waldie, is separating its appropriation from the total budget of the Department of Transportation. Hitherto, it was an all-or-nothing at-all situation: approve or disapprove the whole budget.

Waldie said that most of the new congressmen are conservationists. He added that there will be an early vote on the SST in the House and in the Senate, and there should be enough opponent members of Congress to kill the project.

The Mineral King decision has far-reaching consequences. Under this court decision, the Sierra Club was denied the right to sue as a means of stopping the proposed resort development by the Walt Disney interests of scenic public lands in the Sierra Nevada. Waldie stated that a bill is pending in Congress to permit "standing to sue" of individuals and conservation groups. This bill has a fairly good chance of passing.

In Waldie's view, the Council for Environmental Quality is excellent as a concept, but its performance in the first year of its existence has not lived up to expectations. The council has an independent overseer whose job it is to review every massive federal construction project to determine its environmental consequences and make recommendations to Congress as to appropriations.

Last year's budget of $1 million for the council was far too small. This penny pinching was done "with malice aforethought to prevent the agency from becoming too active." Russell Train, its administrator, is dedicated, but he simply does not have the tools needed for effective control.

As for the Hickel firing, Waldie expressed great disappointment in the dismissal of a "very creditable" Secretary of the Interior. Roger Morton, Hickel's successor, has a miserable conservation record, one that does not engender confidence. Morton has the worst record of all Maryland congressmen. He is known as the defender of Chesapeake Bay, but voted against the Estuarine Protection Act, which offered nationwide benefits to coastline ecology.

Waldie added that the Secretary of the Interior --not the President--sets the tone for environmental policy. An aggressively conservationist Secretary is essential in that critically important post. Morton does not seem to have what it takes in this regard; but neither did Hickel at first. "Watch Morton," advised Waldie. "Hickel underwent a dramatic change on taking over the Department of the Interior. Morton may do likewise. I'm going to give him the benefit of the doubt."

The California Water Project came under special attack by Waldie. "It is faulty in its concepts," he said. The basic defect of this "abysmal plan" is that it permits a population with inadequate air supply to expand further. That defect has become increasingly recognized, and the Environmental Quality Council, now considering the evidence, may condemn the CWP.

The National Wild Rivers Bill is part of the same major problem of preserving the environment from needless destruction, much of it due to "pork barreling." National legislation to protect wild rivers is not faring well at present, but State Senator Peter Behr has introduced a bill in Sacramento to preserve the Eel, Klamath, and Trinity Rivers from massive damming and diversion.

Waldie's feeling on H.R. 8986--the bill he introduced in Congress to preserve Las Trampas Ridge and the Eugene O'Neill home--is that "the home is important, but the essential thing is the ridge." Waldie's bill has been in existence for two years, making little progress. He will reintroduce it this spring. Initial surveys of the home have been made with a view to federal acquisition, but preservation of it and the adjoining scenic lands is by no means assured.

Las Trampas is critically under threat of development, Waldie stressed. He believes that the best chance of preserving it is through purchase by the East Bay Regional Park District. However, EBRPD needs a lot more money for park acquisition and must have a tax increase.

On another local issue--flood control improvements in the Walnut Creek Basin--Congressman Waldie emphasized the importance of public awareness. "Channeling is proceeding with gay abandon," he warned. "I urge all interested in that project to stay alert." (Come to the Feb. 4 program meeting--Ed.)

Waldie concluded his address with the pledge, "I will not knowingly vote in favor of any action that may offer a threat to the environment". The congressman--now acknowledged to be in the running in the California gubernatorial race--went on to answer many questions on national and local ecology. Here is a brief summary.

Baldwin Ship Channel: I don't support it. I must determine its environmental consequences, and I guess they're adverse.

Flood control dams on the Eel River: Any kind of dam is inconsistent with the concept of a wild river. We should tell people it's foolish to live on a flood plain.

Population growth: Every chamber of commerce in the state should be given a new mission--to discourage newcomers and encourage people already here to leave. I no longer believe growth is per se good. Chambers of commerce should concentrate on improving the quality of life for people already in that area.

Pipeline in Alaska: I share the reservations that conservationists have expressed. Irreversible damage is possible. If I err, I'll err on the side of preserving the environment.

Federal Land Use Report: The report recommends placing under one conservation department all related departments now working separately on environmental matters. It sounds good to me.

Mercury and DDT poisoning: The federal government has gone farther than I thought they would on control of DDT. Information on mercury poisoning is claimed to be too fragmentary for the bureaucracy to move. I disagree. Is the mercury in the Delta traceable to any particular source? I don't think so. Perhaps it results from mining years ago. Mercury was used a great deal in gold mining days. The big problem now doesn't appear to be industrial users.

Open Space: I don't know of any massive federal project in that area.

Point Reyes: I think we are going to preserve it.

Sierra Club: Nationally, it is far and away the most respected conservation group. Friends of the Earth are coming along fast. Tax-exempt status for the Sierra Club? I'm not sure they want it. I understand that receipts have not been hurt by loss of tax exemption. With exemption, restrictions on lobbying by the Club would be imposed; and lobbying is essential for its effectiveness.

Peripheral Canal: Contra Costa County can be proud of what it has done already to act as a thorn in the side of the CWP. There isn't much more we of the county can do, except get people outside the county to bring pressure. It is much more than a parochial issue.

Navy Ammunition Depot at Concord: The Navy say they'll never leave it. They want it for the next war. I think they'll have to leave.

Principal threat: The automobile engine, in my opinion, is the greatest threat to the environment. Only when the threat becomes imminent will the internal combustion engine be banned.

Status of the biological and chemical warfare effort: This is covert activity. Despite government declarations calling a halt to this work, I have grave doubts that it will cease.

San Luis Drain: The drain plan has no redeeming feature. It dumps all the pollution into Antioch and relies on tides to sweep it out to sea.

Plan to bring water from the Columbia River to Southern California: The Metropolitan Water District regards the Columbia River as a bystop on the way to the Yukon. I don't think we should bring more water to Southern California. What we want is fewer people. (Applause)

Division of California into two states: That's a bad idea. No problem is solved by division; you end up with two problems. It hasn't worked in Korea, Vietnam, or anywhere else.

Corps of Engineers v. ecology: The Corps is undergoing a metamorphosis. Its people are very perceptive of changing public attitudes. I believe they're sincere in their concern for the environment...unlike the Bureau of Reclamation. I've lost confidence in the B. O. R.

How do you control the Army Engineers? They don't pay attention to a congressman--he won't be around in fifty years, but the Corps will. They court power centers in the committees that deal with their projects. However, even pork-barrel pressure is diminishing. No legislator now boasts, "Look at the big dam I built."

As to the Rivers and Harbors Act, is there any prospect of the item veto for the President? No, Congress will not vote it. Congress reflects the lack of participation by the people.

Federal support of rapid transit: The federal government is now beginning to move in that direction. Penn Central funds? I don't regard that as support of rapid transit!

Air pollution in the Bay Area: BAAPC was set up with a built-in defect that limits its effectiveness--boards of supervisors have the ultimate say.

Population control: I would not support a government ban on more than two children per family. I think people should voluntarily make that decision. One way to encourage population control is through education.

BRIONES TO IMPROVE

To open up the Alhambra Creek Valley recreational area in the north end of Briones Regional Park to the public, EBRPD has authorized the employment of the Berkeley architectural firm of Kolbeck and Christopherson to design a simplified and more economical day camp shelter prototype. The work will be done on an hourly rate basis, but in no case may the total exceed $2,500.

"Opening up the north end of Briones Regional Park is especially important for the residents of Martinez, Pleasant Hill, Concord, and Walnut Creek," EBRPD General Manager Richard C. Trudeau said. "This area in the park is critically needed for active recreation and as an unspoiled viewshed for the many trails... Primary activities planned for the area are to be group camping, hiking, riding, and family picnicking."

EBRPD official Lewis Crutcher estimated that the day camp shelters can be ready for use by June 1. The new shelters, Crutcher said, will accommodate 100 persons. He added that they will be light and friendly, require minimal maintenance, and have a floor stepped down in arena fashion. "They will provide a dry area in inclement weather, shade on hot days...and nominal protection from winds."

EBRPD is planning to provide better access to the north end of the park, with consideration of "alternate entrance corridors" from the Reliez Valley Road. Additional land may be needed on the valley floor to provide for screened parking and an equestrian center.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Feb. 4	Thursday, 7:45 p.m. PARK COUNCIL PROGRAM MEETING. Panel debate: "How much flood control for Walnut Creek watershed?" Top officials of U.S. Corps of Engineers and Contra Costa Flood Control District debate ecological criteria with conservationists. Concord Public Library, 2900 Salvio Street, Concord. Everyone welcome.
Feb. 11	Thursday, 7:30 p.m. ENVIRONMENTAL FORUM: "Government Agencies' Conservation Practices." College Women's Club, 2680 Bancroft Way, Berkeley.
Feb. 25	Thursday, 7:30 p.m. ENVIRONMENTAL FORUM: "Environmental Action Programs." College Women's Club, 2680 Bancroft Way, Berkeley.

REGIONAL PARK NEWS IN BRIEF

EBRPD has recently taken the following action:

***Approved a grazing lease renewal with Ginochio Livestock Co. in Briones Reg. Park for the period Nov. 30, 1970 to Nov. 30, 1971. Annual payment is $21,500.

***Approved a 6-month extension of a lease agreement covering Brooks Is. with a group including Bing Crosby and "Trader Vic" Bergeron. The group maintains a caretaker on the island and pays a $2,720 annual rental.

***Decided to rent a computer. It is planned to put the IBM System 3 computer "on the line" by July 1, 1971. Existing staff will program and operate the computer after intensive training, and no extra personnel will be hired, according to Controller Lowell Wright and his assistant, F. Ronald Lewis. They estimate that the project will save the District about $759 a month.

***Opened a new Development Department with Mrs. Doreta Chaney as chief to seek tax-free gifts of property or money from firms, private individuals, and foundations interested in preserving the environment. To date, $70,050 has been received as gifts, some of it conditional upon matching funds. Included was $15,050 for Point Pinole from an anonymous donor, and a gift of property worth about $40,000 from Park District founder Frederick Peake. Diablo Valley Lions Club donated $600 for picnic tables at Las Trampas Reg. Park.

***Applied for Land and Water Conservation Funds of $250,000 for Point Richmond and Point Pinole; $200,000 from the Wildlife Commission for for Point Richmond; and $35,000 from HUD for Point Pinole.

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March 4 Meeting to Hear California Coastline Threat

At the Program Meeting for Thursday, March 4, the Park Council will have the privilege of hearing Mr. William Kortum, Chairman of the California Coastal Alliance. The CCA is the legislative and public spokesman on coastal matters for the Sierra Club, the Planning & Conservation League, and many smaller organizations that have been formed in an effort to stem the destruction of our precious and irreplaceable coastline.

The CCA is entering its second year of existence, and it would be the obvious choice for a statewide commission having planning and management powers over the California coastline.

Mr. Kortum's talk will cover man's abuse of the coast and the failure of local officials to institute effective protective measures against despoliation. He will explain the make-up of the CCA and what it hopes to accomplish in this session of the legislature with a bill proposing coastline protection and management. His talk will also deal with the future threats from such activities as coastal subdivisions, dredging, oil drilling, industrialization, highway building, and power plant siting. The presentation will be illustrated with color slides.

This may well be the most timely meeting of the year, since we have but one coastline to lose, and all California conservation organizations are unanimous in their opinon that 1971 is the year to save the California coastline.

One word of sober reflection: attendance at our recent program meetings has ranged from excellent to only fair. Unhappily, Park Council members have not been prominent in these audiences. There is much room for improvement, so please give this very important meeting your full support.

See you Thursday, March 4 at the Concord Library, 2900 Salvio Street.

----Manny Lindner
Program Chairman

Earth Gains Momentium

EARTH is a very active ecology organization at Campolindo High School, Moraga. The group was organized in December 1969 by concerned students and faculty members. EARTH's history is, therefore, relatively short compared to its many accomplishments.

The first boost for EARTH came on December 4, 1969, when the entire student population protested the use of the internal combustion engine. Sixteen hundred students found means of transportation other than cars; they came on foot, roller skates, horses, bicycles, and wagons. The results were a nearly empty parking lot and community recognition of the fact that EARTH existed and was functioning. This continues to be EARTH's goal - community awareness of the environmental crises and the attitudinal changes necessary for ecologically sane behavior.

This year EARTH has gained more members, started new programs, and continued many projects begun last year. Recently the organization received the Bay Area Council's Award of Merit, one for which no other similar high school or college group was nominated.

One of EARTH's latest projects is the expansion of the recycling drive. Its purpose is to re-use waste products by collecting used aluminum products from the community. The aluminum is then stored in receptacles at Campolindo, compacted, and sold to an aluminum recycling plant.

Community response has been quite good, but some problems did arise. All the aluminum must be crushed before being taken to the recycling point. Since the crushing had to be done by the students, the load was becoming too much for their feet. This did not, however, stop the students' fight to save their environment. Several of them, including Lance Prather, Al Barney, and Joe Fanelli, invented and built a crusher, appropriately called the "Muncher."

"It works like a giant piston," explained Bob Johnson, government instructor and EARTH advisor. He went on to say that it reduces the volume factor by approximately 5 to 1. With the completion of the "Muncher," the cry went around the campus, "Hey, we sure munched a bunch today!" Now that EARTH is able to handle more aluminum, the next step is to expand the recycling program to other resources such as tin and bi-metal cans and glass. In addition, an effort is being made to get more deposit receptacles placed in the community. A flyer will soon be distributed to local residents, describing the program and listing depository sites.

EARTH also has several other committees. One of them, the Speakers Bureau, consists of well-informed students who speak on ecological topics, either formally or informally. The Speakers Bureau is available on request to other schools, service clubs, and community groups. Speakers may be scheduled by calling EARTH at 376-6036.

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President: Alvin A. Burton, 9 Chadima Court, Pleasant Hill, California, 94523, Telephone 934-5716.

The list of committees, projects, and accomplishments goes on. One, too important to omit, is the Elementary School Teachers. Last year Campolindo students developed a curriculum for 3rd -6th grades, teaching the basic concepts of ecology. This year, teachers have been placed in several local schools on the 5th and 6th grade level. To augment this program, text books for 2nd, 5th, and 7th-8th grades are currently being written; other materials also are being prepared.

What the students at Campolindo High School are doing is proof to the community that concerned students can create change within the "system" by hard work and energy put to good use for a good cause. The community will be given the opportunity to share this commitment by attending an Eco-Fair to be held on Saturday, March 27th, at Campolindo.

----Jane Helrich

WALDIE ASKS PRESIDENT TO VETO PERIPHERAL CANAL

Rep. Jerome R. Waldie (D-Antioch) has praised President Nixon's cancellation of the Cross Florida Barge Canal and called upon the President to cancel the Peripheral Canal Project in California. In his message terminating the Florida Canal, the President stated that the canal "was conceived and designed at a time when the focus of federal concern in such matters was still almost completely on maximizing economic return. In calculating that return, the destruction of natural, ecological values was not counted as a cost."

Waldie commented that the Peripheral Canal carries with it many, if not all, of the dangers of the Florida Canal Project. He said that the two projects were similar, not only in probably serious ecological impact, but in lack of necessity. (Contra Costa Times)

ECOLOGY ROUNDUP

***Annual planting of bare-root trees in East Bay Regional Parks is now under way. About 1,000 California white alders, green boxelders, and sycamores are being planted at Briones, Cull Canyon, and Don Castro. These will augment 3,500 trees already planted.

***Livermore Chamber of Commerce, under its incoming president Milt Codiroli, has declared that it will follow a new policy supporting, instead of opposing, city measures that enhance the environment. Codiroli told The Independent that he believes the business community cannot set itself aside from the residential community and pursue its own interests selfishly.

***A coeducational Boy Scout Explorer Post, cosponsored by EBRPD with the backing of the Boy Scouts of America, has drawn members from four Oakland high schools. Post members, ranging in age from 15 to 21, study ecology and environmental controls as training for possible careers in forestry and natural science fields.

***As their contribution to SOAR (Saving Our American Resources), some 360 Twin Valley District Boy Scouts from the Livermore-Pleasanton area have started to construct two to four miles of three-foot "highwater mark trail" at Del Valle Regional Park. The trail will run westward along the lakeshore.

***EBRPD is seeking qualified lifeguards for its six lakes and pools. All applicants must hold a valid American Red Cross Senior Lifesaving Certificate or equivalent, plus a standard Red Cross first aid card. Deadline for filing is March 8. Call the District HQ at 531-9300 for details.

***EBRPD is developing a camping complex at Anthony Chabot Reg. Park. First phase development, estimated to cost about $127,000, will provide 48 family camping units, group camping facilities for 1,000 people, temporary utilities, and roads. Second phase work, costing about $350,000, will include permanent utilities and a bridge to carry a sewer line across Lake Chabot, near Willow Park golf course. In the $130,000 third phase, the bridge will be decked so that fishermen and light utility vehicles can gain access to the south shoreline. Funding is covered by $505,000 set aside in 1969 and $110,000 earmarked in 1966.

***Contra Costa Times reports that chambers of commerce in Walnut Creek, Lafayette, and Pleasant Hill and a group of Clayton businessmen have endorsed a loop pattern for the proposed state highways 24, 77, and 93. The loop would circle the county, avoiding the congested central area and opening up new areas for development (emphasis added).

***Don the Beachcomber Enterprises, of Southern California, has leased the 18-hole Tilden Park golf course for 25 years. The company has heavy investments in real estate and restaurants and is diversifying into leisure-time activities. EBRPD directors approved the lease by a 6-to-1 vote. The lone dissenter was director Paul Badger. He restated his position that EBRPD had neglected and mismanaged the course and that the revenue to be derived from the lease was "insufficient."

***Aiming at opening Shadow Cliffs Aquatic Park this summer, EBRPD is moving to grant a right of way to Alameda County permitting four-laning of Stanley Blvd. and immediate design of safe park access.

***According to Tome Schulenberg, quoted in The Quail, Cocoa (Florida) and Freeport (Texas) led the Audubon Christmas Bird Count with 205 species. Oakland had 170.

***Opposition to a proposed Alameda County $60-65 million ridgetop road is growing. The road would run from Sunol along Pleasanton Ridge to Castro Valley. Its declared purpose is recreational, but conservationists fear that the real reason for constructing it is to open this prime scenic area to residential development. The Livermore Area Recreation and Park District has become the first public agency to oppose the project. Alameda County planning chief William Fraley has pointed out that the $60 million could purchase 100 square miles of scenic hillside land. The ABAG Regional Plan, formally adopted by ABAG, designates the threatened area as permanent open space.

MOTORCYCLISTS PRACTICE ECOLOGY

Fremont Motorcycle Club, concerned about the environment, is helping EBRPD to re-seed and check erosion on its "motorcycle hill." Thirty-two members turned out on two successive Saturdays in December, working a total of seven hours to sow some 1,800 pounds of annual and perennial rye seed by hand and then pitchforked about 21 tons of hay and straw over it.

"The club members did a good job," said Greg Phillips, Manager of Anthony Chabot Regional Park in which the 67-acre "motorcycle hill" is situated. "The objective is to reseed eroded areas and re-establish plant growth." He added, "The December program was in the nature of a pilot project. In January we'll have some more motorcycle club work parties and we hope to inaugurate a rotational pattern for riding so that trails that have been ridden too much can be left fallow, so to speak. Ultimately, we hope to start brush and tree plantings which will hide the badly eroded areas from view until the scars heal."

Leader of the effort is Jerry Bohon, Pleasanton, who is also Chairman of the Standing Committee on Mechanical Parks and Trails of the East Bay Trail Council. Bohon, a family man, sums up the club's philosophy this way: "We want to promote safety, protect the environment, and earn the goodwill of the public. We'd like more places where we could ride our motorcycles without violating the law..."

BIG CATS REPORTED

Mountain lions still roam the Bay Area, according to a report in The Quail, the bulletin of the Mt. Diablo Audubon Society. Source of the report was Bruce Elliott, from the Game Management Division of California Fish and Game, who addressed the December meeting of the society.

F & G apparently knows almost every mountain lion in the Bay Area. Two lions have been reported in the Morgan Territory. There have been several in the Mt. Hamilton Range, one in the Soquel area, and a snow-white lion in San Mateo County. F & G was successful in getting the big cats placed on the game list, a step toward the status of a protected species.

Other highlights of Elliott's talk include this one: Controlled fire can be beneficial. A survey made on the Mines Road (in the mountains behind Livermore) showed no deer in a test area in September. After controlled burning had removed the chaparral and allowed grass to grow, 39 deer were observed in the same area in November.

Feral dogs (pets gone wild), hunting in packs, kill as many as 50% of fawns in some areas. Automobiles also make a large contribution to the death rate of deer. Cars killed 211 deer in Contra Costa County in November 1969.

Greensheet Planning Major Issue On Environment

The Contra Costa Times has announced plans to publish an entire supplement about the environment on Sunday, June 27. To detail each specific problem, the issue will be divided into sections dealing with Land, Water, Air, Man, Health, and Technology.

According to the announcement, "Environment '71" will analyze the status of today's air, land, and water, discuss the inherent dangers of pollution, and tell what is being done to "correct the atmosphere, clean the water, and unclutter the land."

The announcement states that with publication of "Environment '71" the Contra Costa Times will become the first newspaper in the nation to devote a special section of this magnitude exclusively to the environment.

Typewritten contributions from environmental groups, industries, research firms, regulatory agencies, and other sources are welcomed. They should be double-spaced on 8 1/2 x 11 inch paper.

HIKING SEASON TO OPEN MARCH 14

A new season of Park Council hikes is due to open on March 14 with a climb through beautiful woodlands to Las Trampas Ridge. Come along if you like to get away from the asphalt jungle, breathe fragrant air instead of gaseous industrial effluents, and listen to the sounds of silence. You'll enjoy good company and exquisite scenery.

Meet in front of the Alamo Safeway on Sunday, March 14, at 9:30 a.m. Bring the usual hiking stuff, especially your lunch. Don't be flabbergasted if you see a golden eagle; there are some eagles in the area.

Here's the schedule for this spring's rambles. Please clip it and pin it on your bulletin board. Better still, mark your calendar.

PARK COUNCIL OUTINGS, 1971

Note: (a) All hikes take place on Sundays; (b) meeting time is 9:30 a.m.; (c) for information, call Sally Hartell at 837-7015.

March 14	Las Trampas. Meet at Alamo Safeway.
March 28	Briones Regional Park. Meet at north entrance to park, on Briones Road; turn off Alhambra Valley Road.
April 25	Morgan Territory. Details later.
May 9	Rocky Ridge. Details later.
May 23	Black Hawk Road. Details later.
June 6	Redwood Regional Park. Details later.

ECOLOGLY CALENDAR

March 2	Tuesday, 7:30 p.m. Zero Population Growth meeting, Geary Road Co-op, Walnut Creek.
March 4	Thursday, 7:45 p.m. PARK COUNCIL PROGRAM MEETING, Concord Library, 2900 Salvio Street, Concord. William Kortum, chairman of California Coastal Alliance, speaks on ways to save our coastline.
March 11	Thursday, copy deadline for April Park Council News.
March 14	Sunday, 9:30 a.m. PARK COUNCIL OUTING to Las Trampas Ridge. Meet at Alamo Safeway.
March 27	Saturday, Eco-Fair, Campolindo High School, Moraga.
March 28	Sunday, 9:30 a.m. PARK COUNCIL OUTING, Briones Reg. Park. Meet at north gate to park, Briones Road, off Alhambra Valley Road.
April 1	Thursday, 7:45 p.m. PARK COUNCIL PROGRAM MEETING. Details to be announced.

BOARD CHANGES AT PARK DISTRICT

New officers of the Board of Directors of the East Bay Regional Park District have been elected. Vice-president Fred C. Blumberg, Lafayette, was elected president, succeeding John A. Madonald, Oakland, 25-year member of the Board and presiding officer for the past two years. Marlin W. Haley, Hayward, was named vice president; Paul J. Badger, Pinole, was elected treasurer, succeeding Paul E. Harberts, Berkeley: and Harberts was named to succeed Clyde R. Woolridge, Oakland, as secretary. According to Board policy, the offices rotate at least every two years.

In addition, Dr. Howard L. Cogswell, Hayward, the newest member of the Board, took his seat. He succeeds George C. Roeding, Jr., Fremont, who was defeated in the November election.

ZPG STARTS DV CHAPTER

Zero Population Growth has announced plans to form a new chapter for Diablo Valley. ZPG will hold an exploratory meeting on Tuesday, March 2, at 7:30 p.m. in the Geary Road Co-op. Highly knowledgeable coordinators of the Richmond and Berkeley chapters will be on hand to explain the goals of ZPG and answer questions. All interested people are invited to attend. For details, call Anita or William Nevison in Concord (682-3677).

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CONTRA COSTA PARK COUNCIL

PARK COUNCIL NEWS

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Editor: Patrick Whittle, 176 Waterman Circle, Danville, Calif., 94526, Telephone 837-3478
Artwork and Printing: Goldenberg, 727 Main St., Martinez, Calif., 94553, Telephone 228-1677

Hornbeck to Speak on Soviet Parks and Open Spaces

The Park Council program meeting on April 1 will feature Hulet Hornbeck, Chief of Land Acquisition and Management for East Bay Regional Park District. Hornbeck toured the Soviet Union recently, inspecting parks and open space areas. Using color slides, he will describe his impressions and discuss conversations he held with his Soviet counterparts engaged in the preservation of scenic lands. This is a topic of outstanding interest, so be sure to come along:

Date: April 1, 1971 Time: 7:45 p.m. Place: Concord Public Library Location: 2900 Salvio Street, Concord.

---------- Manny Lindner,
Program Chairman

ANNUAL DINNER MEETING SET FOR MAY 7

Mark May 7 on your calendar now for the annual dinner meeting of the Park Council. You'll find full details in the next issue of Park Council News. Meanwhile, please note that our guests of honor will be California Senator and Mrs. Peter Behr. Senator Behr (Marin County) is a notable conservationist, esteemed for saving the Point Reyes acquisition program and pushing the Wild Rivers legislation, among other accomplishments. He is also a most entertaining speaker. Don't miss this annual highlight of the Park Council's activities.

---------- Manny Lindner,
Program Chairman

PRES. BURTON URGES YES ON EBRPD TAX INCREASE

A tax we actually want? Incredible but true. Most of us are unhappy about our taxes because we are not in sympathy with how our money is spent. We wonder if all those government employees are really necessary, we hate to see our money going to welfare chiselers, and we detest seeing it going to support a war that nobody wants. What a relief to see our tax money spent for something really worth while and close at hand, something that we can ourselves enjoy. Tax money to buy parks is something special, and almost a pleasure to pay.

The East Bay Regional Park District is virtually out of money to buy land. The combination of inflation and the need to develop and maintain more park land has caught up with its meager 10-cent tax rate. A bill will soon be introduced in the legislature to increase the tax rate to 20 cents. Without this increase, our park land acquisition program comes to a halt. And what would be most galling, federal funds would be lost to us because we would not be able to put up matching money.

Stipulations will be firm that the great bulk of this additional 10 cents will go for land acquisition. With it, we can round out Las Trampas to the many square miles that it should contain (including the Eugene O'Neill home and Bolinger Canyon); we can do something more than talk about desperately needed shoreline parks; we can start new regional parks in areas the developers haven't found yet; and we can link everything together with a superb system of trails.

In this "Decade of the Environment," there has been much brave talk about the need for open space, parks, and green belts. The need is unquestioned. However, as a practical matter the Regional Park District is the only agency presently constituted to do anything about preserving open space. And unless we give the District something to work with, it will be helpless.

Passage of this legislation is going to be the test. Are we sincere in saying we want parks and open space? Are we willing to pay the price, or has it all been just empty talk? This is what our legislators must know before they give us the requisite legislation. If you are a concerned citizen, if you are sincere in wanting parks and open space, it is vitally important that you write and tell them so. Passage of the legislation is by no means assured. Your letter to Assemblyman John Knox, Senator John Nejedly, or Assemblyman James Dent just might make the difference. Remember, they are not mind readers---you have to tell them.

----------Al Burton

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President: Alvin A. Burton, 9 Chadima Court, Pleasant Hill, California, 94523, Telephone 934-5716.

PLANS FOR COAST PRESERVATION AIRED

William Kortum, Chairman of the California Coastal Alliance spoke at the March 4 program meeting of the Park Council. His excellent presentation included beautiful slides of the California Coastline from Humboldt County to the Mexican border. We saw how the splendor of our coast has been marred in many areas by man's activities, including industrial plants, huge excavations for development of "second home" communities, and dense housing along the edge of the cliffs or right on the beach. We were treated to a view of extraordinary man-made "islands" off the coast of L. A.--oil rigs camouflaged by paint and palm trees. In countless other areas, the right of the public to reach and enjoy the beach (which belongs to all of us) has been blocked or made nearly impossible. Kortum stated that permits for the developments were allowed by local governments, probably under great pressure. These authorities have thus set precedents for decisions that will be difficult or impossible to reverse.

To preserve what is left of our coastline and to ensure the rights of the public to enjoy this beautiful natural resource, legislation is being prepared in the state assembly to set up a Coastline Commission. Assemblyman John Dunlap and Alan Sieroty will shortly introduce their bill, which will have the backing of the California Coastal Alliance. It calls for the formation of a four-year study commission with permit rights over all development from within 3,000feet inland of the tidelands to three miles seaward. The commission would be composed of five regional commissions, with representatives from county and city governments in addition to lay people (similar to other regional agencies such as BCDC and BAAPCD).

Chairmen of the regional commissions, who must be laymen, would constitute the state commission, along with five other representatives appointed by the governor. The commission probably would operate primarily as a review and appeal board, with most of the local decisions being handled by local planning commissions. Since there are no precedents, the commission would not be bound by past decisions. It would have expert staff to guide its actions. A budget of $600,000 a year is proposed. (Also pending is a federal bill that would include a provision for matching funds to states forming coastal commissions.)

California Coastal Alliance feels that this is a strong bill, worthy of support as it now stands by all interested conservation and citizen groups. Kortum has promised to keep in touch with the Park Council and let us know when direct action would be most helpful. Meantime, inform your assemblyman and senators of your interest in protecting the coastline.

The California Coastal Alliance needs funds to wage a campaign of support for the Dunlop-Sieroty bill. Contributions for this very worth cause may be sent to:

California Coastal Alliance
c/o Mr. William Kortum
180 Ely Rd.
Petaluma, CA 94952

----------Valerie Clark

SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL PEAK

Are you aware that only half of Mount Diablo is included in the State Park? The other half should be bought by the State before it is too late. Will you help? If each of you wrote one letter--or better, several,--it might make all the difference.

In 1964, House Resolution #82 (introduced by then Assemblyman Waldie) directed the Department of Parks and Recreation "to undertake a study to determine the feasibility of rounding out the present boundary of Mount Diablo State Park in Contra Costa County and to comply with the provisions of the Cameron-Unruh Beach, Park, Recreational, and Historical Facilities Bond Act of 1964." This study was made. The acquisition of 5,966 acres was recommended. To-day not a single acre of this project has been acquired. Mt. Diablo has not received, or been allocated, one cent from the 1964 Bond Act funds. Some of the 1964 Bond Act funds still have not been expended. There is said to be available $9 million, or possibly as much as $16 million, that was assigned by the Bond Act to development which now, by the passage of time, can be used "for the highest priority." State Parks and Recreation Director Mott has elected to use these funds for development, and they are probably so designated in the state budget. For what developments, we do not yet know. But isn't land acquisition more important at this time?

Certain areas on Mount Diablo are now "For Sale," with the probability of development to follow. The Department of Parks and Recreation is now appraising some (few?) parcels, although apparently without any funding in view. Possibly there may be left-over funds from uncompleted projects. If public pressure for expansion of Mount Diablo State Park were intense, funds might possibly be assigned, or diverted, to Mount Diablo.

It seems like a good time to express your convictions to your legislators, to Mr. William Penn Mott, Jr., Director, Department of Parks and Recreation (P. O. Box 2390, Sacramento, Ca. 95811), and to Mr. Daniel D. Villanueva, Chmn., State Park and Recreation Commission (P. O. Box 2390, Sacramento, Ca. 95811, or c/o KMEX-TV, 721 Bronson, Hollywood, Ca. 90038).

If you write in favor of enlargement, don't be modest! To buy the rest of Mount Diablo proper will take at least $3.5 million, more likely $4 million. An additional $1.5 million would buy acreage to the southeast, along Morgan Territory Road, which would take some of the pressure off Mt. Diablo. Although no precise count is available, it is known that over 280,000 persons have visited Mt. Diablo in a single year.

----------Mary Bowerman

SAN RAMON PLAN REVEALED

County Planning Director Tony Deheasus has given details of a new San Ramon Plan that, if implemented, would retain over 10,000 acres of open space out of 18,000 in the planning area. The previous plan contained only 300 acres of open space.

A committee of the Park Council is studying the plan. So are chambers of commerce, homeowner groups, and interested individuals. Park Council News will report on the plan in the next issue.

BIKEWAY PROPOSAL GAINS SUPPORT

A Park Council proposal for a 40-mile bicycle path from Pleasanton through Martinez to Pinole is receiving a lot of attention and promises of support. The proposal was endorsed by the California Hiking and Riding Trails Advisory Committee in January 1969 with the recommendation that the state establish the path "as a pilot project."

As proposed, the trail would consist of a blacktop path following the Southern Pacific right of way from Shadow Cliffs Regional Park at Pleasanton, through Dublin, San Ramon, Danville, Alamo, Walnut Creek, Pleasant Hill, and Concord to Martinez; then, along Carquinez Strait and San Pablo Bay to Pinole.

It would serve as both a recreational trail and a major transportation route: major in the sense that the nation is experiencing a boom in bikeways as an increasingly important element in a comprehensive transportation system.

Recent publicity for the "SP Trail" in local newspapers has generated much favorable comment and calls for action. Alamo-Danville Junior Women's Club has undertaken to promote the project energetically in its area. The club intends also to urge adjoining branches of this national organization to join the effort.

You'll hear more about the proposal in the next few weeks. Meanwhile, you could help greatly by talking-up the idea. In doing so, please include these points: (1) Precedent exists in a footpath along the SP between La Serena and Camille Avenues, Danville, constructed 10 years ago by the local school district with SP's agreement. The path is maintained by S. R. V. Unified School District as a safe access route to Rancho Romero School. (2) SP recently agreed to permit Marin County to construct a bikeway along the NWP tracks from Sausalito to Mill Valley. (3) Bicycling along the SP Trail would be many times safer than riding a bicycle on streets and highways. (4) The entire route could be constructed for what it costs to widen a few hundred yards of road. (5) Portions of the route are already in heavy but unregulated use as de facto trails, and enlightened supervision is urgently necessary to prevent nuisance and accidents.

Bicycle riding is healthy, pleasant, inexpensive, and ecologically sound. That's why three California legislators have introduced bills to promote bicycle routes. The legislators are Assemblyman John Knox (D-Richmond), Senator Peter Behr (R-Marin County), and Senator James Mills (D-San Diego). Now's the time for Contra Costa County to lead the way.

LAS TRAMPAS NATIONAL PARK PROSPECTS BRIGHTEN

Rep. Jerome R. Waldie (D-Antioch) has reintroduced legislation calling for creation of a Las Trampas National Park to include the Eugene O'Neill home and several thousand acres of adjacent open space.

Waldie said that more than 8,000 signatures have been collected by a citizen's group in Contra Costa County urging Chairman Wayne N. Aspinall, of the House Committee on Interior Affairs, to give the Las Trampas bill consideration. He added that the threats to "one of the last wilderness-type sites in the metropolitan Bay Area" are "great and imminent" because of developers and highway designers.

"We have more support for the Las Trampas-O'Neill bill now than at any previous time," he continued, "but I would strongly urge all interested persons to inform Chairman Aspinall of their own concern for needed open space in our crowded, sterile residential areas."

The address is: Cong. Wayne N. Aspinall, Chairman, House of Representatives Comm. on Interior Affairs, House Office Bldg., Washington, D. C. 20515. The bill is HR-8986.

MORGAN TERRITORY TO SHOW ITS SPLENDOR

Members and friends are invited to enjoy a Park Council hike in the Morgan Territory on Sunday, April 25. This magnificent area on the eastern slopes of Mt. Diablo is far enough off the beaten track to have remained unspoiled--so far. Come along. You're assured of a delightful experience. And you'll go home fired with resolve to see the Morgan Territory preserved as an extension of Mt. Diablo State Park.

Meet 9:30 a.m. outside the Pioneer Inn, Clayton. Bring sustenance. Call Sally Hartwell at 837-7015 for further details.

MAN-MADE MARSHES PROPOSED

Not only preserve existing marshlands but build new ones! That is the rallying cry of a unique, one-man crusade launched by Richard Collins, who lives on Tassajara Road in the open space between Danville and Pleasanton.

"In terms of life-supporting ability per acre, nothing compares with a marsh," he told the Valley Pioneer. "The nutrients produced in these tidal areas are absolutely essential to support of life in the oceans." Collins added, "Eliminate the marsh, and you effectively eliminate the fishing industry."

Testifying before the California Environmental Quality Study Council recently, he proposed that the state establish a pilot project for marsh building. This project would include suitable areas along the coast as well as inland. He foresees numerous small "wetlands parks" on the outskirts of towns. Coastline marshes could be created by "upwater dams" that funnel surf into flat areas just above tide level.

Collins is looking into the possibility of founding a national organization to further these concepts throughout the United States. As an alternative, he is considering working in collaboration with existing conservation groups such as the California Coastal Alliance.

For details, call Richard Collins at 828-2779 or write to him at Route 1, Box 651, Pleasanton, Calif. 94566.

ECOLOGLY CALENDAR

April 1	Thursday, 7:45 p.m., PARK COUNCIL PROGRAM MEETING. Hulet Hornbeck speaks on "Park and Open Space Preservation in the Soviet Union." Color slides. Concord Public Library, 2900 Salvio Street, Concord. (See story)
April 21	Wednesday, 7:45 p.m., PARK COUNCIL BOARD MEETING. Walnut Creek Recreation Building, 301 Sheppard Road, in Heather Farms Park. All welcome
April 24	Saturday, all day, ENVIRONMENTAL SYMPOSIUM. Amador High School, Pleasanton. (See story)
April 25	Sunday, 9:30 a.m., PARK COUNCIL OUTING to Morgan Territory. Meet at Pioneer Inn, Clayton. (See story)
May 7	Friday evening, PARK COUNCIL ANNUAL DINNER MEETING. Keynote speaker Senator Peter Behr (Marin County). (See story)
May 9	Sunday, 9:30 a.m., PARK COUNCIL OUTING to Rocky Ridge, Bollinger Canyon. Details in May issue.

SUPREME COURT OPPOSES FREEWAYS IN PARKS

The U.S. Supreme Court has declared, in a unanimous decision, that federally financed highways may not be built through park areas except in the "most unusual situation." The court's decision came on a suit involving Bureau of Public Roads approval of a six-lane freeway through Overton Park in Memphis, Tenn., long opposed by the Sierra Club. The court ordered a "thorough, probing, in-depth review "by the Federal Court in Tennessee of the government's freeway proposal. In the opinion written by Justice Thurgood Marshall, the court rejected the government's claim that it has discretion to locate highway routes that are "feasible and prudent." Marshall said that conservationists would lose every time if the "prudent" theory were followed. "People do not live or work in parks and their homes and businesses don't have to be torn up and compensated for at great expense," he added. "The few green havens that are public parks are not to be lost unless there are truly unusual factors present in a particular case."

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CONTRA COSTA PARK COUNCIL

PARK COUNCIL NEWS

VOL. 71 NO. 5 MAY 1971

Newsletter of the Contra Costa Park Council, P.O. Box 4322, Walnut Creek, Calif., 94596
Editor: Patrick Whittle, 176 Waterman Circle, Danville, Calif., 94526, Telephone 837-3478
Artwork and Printing: Goldenberg, 727 Main St., Martinez, Calif., 94553, Telephone 228-1677

SEN PETER BEHR TO SPEAK AT ANNUAL DINNER

State Senator Peter Behr (R-Marin County) will be the distinguished speaker at the Park Council Annual Dinner Meeting on Friday, May 7. Place: Boundary Oak Restaurant, Walnut Creek. Time: no-host cocktails 6:30-7:30 p.m., dinner at 7:30 p.m.

Sen. Behr's topic of the evening is "Saving our Wild Rivers in California." A fascinating speaker, the senator will talk about the whys and wherefores of the legislation he has introduced to protect a priceless heritage. The heritage: free-running, pure rivers abounding in wildlife. The bill: SB-107.

Although best known for leading the successful fight to complete purchase of the Pt. Reyes National Seashore, he has been active in a wide range of ecological campaigns. He has promoted legislation to save the mountain lion, preserve the tule elk, prohibit oil drilling and exploration for oil in state tidelands, defeat the Napa Valley Freeway project, and create a statewide system of bicycle paths. He is the California Senate's representative to BCDC, and was recently appointed to the California Environmental Quality Study Council.

To get to the Boundary Oak Restaurant, take Ygnacio Valley Road to Oak Grove Road and go about 1/2 mile. Look for Valley Vista Road on your left, with a sign pointing to the public golf course. Follow that road to the top of the hill. The restaurant is in the complex of buildings at the golf course.

For your convenience, a dinner reservation form is attached. Please help us--and yourself--by filling it out now and mailing it with your check so that we can make efficient arrangements.

This event promises to be the pleasantest yet in our tradition of dinner meetings, so please do this: (1) plan to attend; (2) mark your calendar; (3) send in your reservation promptly.

----------Manny Lindner
Program Chairman

YOUR YES NEEDED NOW ON PARK TAX HIKE

AB 925 introduced by Assemblyman John Knox will increase the tax rate for the Regional Park District. This bill is paradox! It calls for a tax increase but is almost universally greeted with enthusiasm. Not only can we, ourselves, enjoy these parks, but we have the happy feeling that we are leaving a legacy for the people who will follow us. Without the tax increase there can be no completing and developing the parks we have, and certainly no new regional parks. And what would hurt most, the federal matching funds that would help us buy land would be forever lost.

The accompanying fact sheet gives information about the Park District and the urgency of its need for additional funds. It tells what you can do to help. Assemblyman Knox and the other Bay Area legislators have made it clear that they will push this legislation along only if the message comes to them loud and clear that their people want it. AB 925 is the key to parks and open space in Alameda and Contra Costa counties. If we are sincere in our desire for park land, we have to tell our legislators that we want them to support AB 925. Remember - they are not mind readers! Only if they hear from us will this legislation have a chance of passage.

Another means of supporting AB 925 is through endorsements of organizations that you may belong to. The Park Council in Contra Costa county and the Trails Council in Alameda county have sent this fact sheet and a letter requesting endorsement of AB 925 to virtually every organization in the two counties. Some 4,300 of these letters have been mailed to the presidents of these groups. Service clubs, health organizations, PTAs, all types of organizations have received these letters. The response from this wide cross section of organizations should go far to convince the legislators that we do want parks and open space.

If you really want to help the conservation cause, please do this: Besides writing your own letter to your legislators, phone the presidents of any organization that you belong to and ask them if they have received the letter about obtaining more money for the Regional Park District. Then encourage them to get a resolution favoring AB 925 from the organization and forward it to one (or more) of the Bay Area legislators. Resolutions from organizations representing many people carry a great deal of influence with legislators.

Passage of AB 925 will be a crucial test. Do we really mean what we have all been saying about the desperate need for parks and open space, or have we just been talking? If we are sincere in wanting these things, active and vigorous support of AB 925 is one of the best ways to prove it.

----------Al Burton,
President

The Contra Costa Park Council, formerly the Contra Costa Park and Recreation Council, is a non-profit organization incorporated under the laws of the State of California. The Park Council is dedicated to fostering the natural beauty of the county, preserving open space, and providing adequate opportunity for healthful recreation. Contributions are tax-deductible.
President: Alvin A. Burton, 9 Chadima Court, Pleasant Hill, California, 94523, Telephone 934-5716.

NEW SAN RAMON PLAN ECLIPSES OLD

The revised general plan for the southern end of San Ramon Valley has caused quite a stir. Since County Planning Director Tony Dehaesus revealed the plan early in March, it has been discussed and criticized by chambers of commerce, homeowner groups, and interested individuals.

A Park Council committee has analyzed it from a conservationist viewpoint and concluded that it represents a dramatic improvement over the existing plan. The older plan envisioned typical L.A. sprawl covering the area from end to end. Open space was limited to a mere 300 acres, consisting entirely of a PG&E right-of-way.

Under the new plan, more than 10,000 acres of open space would be retained out of 18,000 acres in the planning area. Virtually the entire floor would be developed, including a large industrial park on what is now the Bishop Ranch, but essentially all the ridges and highlands would be kept open.

The committee questioned the wisdom of placing a large Western Electric assembly plant employing several thousand workers in a beautiful, low-density residential area. Plenty of industrial land with all utilities, freeways, railroads, and excellent public transportation is available in Richmond and Oakland. Also available in those cities is a large population of unemployed and underemployed people who would jump at the chance of a good job. Nonetheless, the pressure to develop the Bishop Ranch is immense, and there is little chance of resisting it at the present point in time. Three or four years from now, perhaps, but not in 1971.

Of particular significance is the fact that the San Ramon plan accords closely with the ABAG Regional Plan. ABAG's plan was prepared at great expense to the taxpayer and was approved by ABAG's members, including Contra Costa County. The committee feels strongly that the ABAG plan, with its extensive preservation of open space, must be implemented if the Bay Area is to retain its quality of environment. Cities and counties in ABAG would be betraying the public trust and scandalously wasting tax money if they failed to implement it after voting for it.

Economic studies recently completed--the People for Open Space study and the Palo Alto Foothills study--leave no doubt that sprawling development is a tremendous economic burden to the taxpayer. Conversely, orderly development within large greenbelts saves the taxpayer a fortune, as well as immeasurably enhancing amenity values.

The committee urges you to let the Contra Costa County planning commission and board of supervisors know that you don't want to see the open space element of the San Ramon and ABAG plans frittered away at the behest of land speculators.

As for the justice of depriving a property owner of development rights, there is ample precedent in city zoning as practiced throughout the United States. The committee believes, however, that just compensation is essential.

EXTRA-SPECIAL OUTING COMING UP

The Park Council outing schedule has been changed to take advantage of a rare opportunity. On May 9, we shall be hiking into the Black Hills area of the Blackhawk Ranch, on the south side of Mt. Diablo. This area is said to be exceptionally rich in fossils. It has been the scene of many paleontological investigations by U.C. The area is rugged and scenic, with spectacular views from the ridge, and is not open to the public. We have been fortunate to get special permission for this unique occasion. The hike is probably going to be strenuous, so be prepared; in particular, bring a thirst quencher. Meet in the Safeway parking lot at Alamo, 9:30 a.m., Sunday, May 9.

On May 23, we shall have the outing to Rocky Ridge, originally scheduled for May 9. The ridge, which forms the western edge of Bollinger Canyon, has only recently been opened to the public through acquisition by EBRPD for Las Trampas Regional Park. You will be able to look across miles of gorgeous, unspoiled scenery to the Oakland Hills and beyond to San Francisco. Meet on Sunday, May 23, 9:30 a.m., in the parking lot of the Alamo Safeway.

BROOKS ISLAND MAKES PROGRESS

In another step to complete funding of 74-acre Brooks Island Regional Park off Richmond Inner Harbor, EBRPD directors have authorized filing an amended application with HUD for $327,686.

Total cost of the acquisition of Brooks Island park, which had entered the condemnation action, was $655,373. EBRPD received $450,000 in State Park Bond funds for the island purchase. Originally, EBRPD had sought only $165,000 from HUD, this figure being based on under-evaluation of the property. HUD officials have indicated that under terms of the amended application, $99,000 will be forthcoming soon and the balance toward the end of this fiscal year or, possibly in the first quarter of the next fiscal period. They indicated that an application for development funds at the island park would be entertained later.

PARK DISTRICT LAUDED

High praise for the speedy and efficient manner in which EBRPD completes land acquisition projects has come from Russell W. Porter, Manager, Grants Administration and Local Assistance Branch, State Department of Parks and Recreation.

Writing to EBRPD General Manager Richard C. Trudeau, he expressed pleasure that the Park District is taking the preliminary steps to acquire acreage for the proposed Coal Mines Area Regional Park near Pittsburg. "....I should write you to indicate how pleased we have been with the efficient manner in which you have undertaken and completed your projects within the scheduled time. It normally requires about four years, on the average, for most local agencies to complete their acquisition projects. Even with very complicated purchases, your agency has been able to halve that time...."

VOLTE-FACE AT LAS TRAMPAS

In a series of rapid-fire actions, EBRPD Directors shifted $26,300 originally earmarked by the state for development at Las Trampas Wilderness Regional Park to land acquisition. They also cut back development plans and approved negotiations to buy 32.9 acres of land.

The action brought smiles from a dozen or so youngsters--many of them from Concord's El Monte School. They presented two petitions containing some 1500 names from their school and Mt. Diablo High School's Summit Seeker Club urging the land acquisition move. They also presented more than 30 letters.

"Had the $26,300 initially been for acquisition, we would have been pleased, and the limited development would now be completed," EBRPD General Manager Richard C. Trudeau said. He explained that last fall when the $26,300 in surplus State Park Bond funds became available there was a state provision that the money must be used for development.

Picnic tables will be cut from 20 to 10 and barbecue units from 12 to five. A projected 2400-foot rail fence will be shortened to 200 feet. A parking lot will be built on property to the west of the stub end of Bollinger Canyon Road.

"You will recall that we have had several people object to any development of any kind at Las Trampas," Trudeau reminded the Board. "Some have even gone so far as to attempt to get the $26,300 grant cancelled rather than have us receive it for development." He added that some opponents now concede that limited development is necessary.

The Board also approved the expenditure of $1000 for independent appraisal of 32.9 acres of land owned by Mrs. Rose Mary Trelut, an Oakland widow. "This property," Trudeau explained, "is situated in the saddle as one looks northwest from the end of Bollinger Canyon Road and has our top priority. This acquisition will give us additional control of the entire area between Rocky and Las Trampas Ridges." The Board also approved the filing of an application with the U.S. Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for $26,300 to match the State Park Bond Funds.

CONSERVATION CAPSULES

* St. Timothy's Episcopal Church, Danville, has dedicated 2 acres of scenic land as a community park. Quoting the scriptural "It is better to give than to receive," the church donated the property with no strings attached, other than for the development of a greenbelt within the property. Valued at around $40,000, the land fronts on Diablo Road and Fairway Drive.

* U.S. Soil Conservation Service, Livermore, is investigating the use of plants to reduce pollution from municipal sewage. According to Clifford C. Sorensen, district conservationist, plants and soil act as a natural filter when sewage water is applied to growing crops. This principle is widely used in Europe and Australia. A Pleasanton rancher is currently irrigating a 70-acre pasture with effluent from the local sewage treatment facility. He has obtained high forage yields in this manner.

* The Orinda Association has expressed strong opposition to planned widening of Camino Pablo Expressway. Carl Weber, chairman of the association planning committee, said that residents object to the plan because it "does not provide for landscaping or preservation of the natural beauty of the area, pedestrian or bicycle paths, traffic signals, does not consider adverse effect of increased noise levels or adverse effect on property values."

THE OCCASIONAL McNICOLL 4/4/71

How Green Was My Valley

(From The Independent, with permission)

By RON McNICOLL

THE VALLEY, 2001 A.D.--Civic dignitaries dedicated the Ralph Hotchkiss Memorial Open Space here yesterday in tribute to the man who made it all possible.

The one square yard of artificial turf is named after the far-sighted valley planning commissioner who was second to none in fighting for the preservation of open space here.

The new 37 story Amorous Arms Apartments provides a fitting backdrop and commanding view of the Memorial Open Space. Commuters on the 8 lane freeway which runs within 50 feet of the monument also get a brief glimpse to take their minds off driving for a moment.

President Digby Mudge flew here on the Presidential SST to dedicate the monument.

"More of our citizens should have had the ecological outlook which Hotchkiss had," said the President.

Sterling Caper, planning director for the valley, said that thanks to Hotchkiss's foresight, valley residents won't have to travel to the Sierras to enjoy a full square yard of open space.

"We may someday be the envy of the nation for our open space," said Caper, "at the rate things are going."

The dedication ceremony was picketed by a group called the White Cement Citizens Council which protested the open space does not "fit in with the scheme of things in the valley."

"We appreciate the fact artificial turf was used to cut maintenance costs, which is far superior, of course, to real grass. But paving it over with cement would make this open space level with the adjacent freeway, therefore more compatible with it aesthetically, and reduce maintenance costs further, an important consideration for us taxpayers in home and industry," said a spokesman.

The White Cement Citizens Council is an ad hoc group comprised of 25 cement contractors and 142 quarry operators.

PARK COUNCIL DINNER RESERVATION

To: Mrs. Wm. Sattler
4050 Poplar Avenue
Concord, CA 94521

I'd like to enjoy good food and good company at the annual dinner on May 7.

Please reserve ____ places @ $5 each. Enclosed is my check for $_____.

Name and address if different from label on back:

ECOLOGY CALENDAR

May 7	Friday, PARK COUNCIL ANNUAL DINNER MEETING, Boundary Oak Restaurant, Walnut Creek. No-host cocktails 6:30 p.m., dinner 7:30 p.m. Keynote speaker Sen. Peter Behr (R-Marin County). See story.
May 9	Sunday, 9:30 a.m., PARK COUNCIL OUTING to Black Hills, Blackhawk Ranch. See story.
May 19	Wednesday, 7:45 p.m., PARK COUNCIL BOARD MEETING, Walnut Creek Rec. Bldg., 301 Sheppard Road, in Heather Farms Park. All welcome.
May 23	Sunday, 9:30 a.m., PARK COUNCIL OUTING to Rocky Ridge, Bollinger Canyon. See story.
June 6	Sunday, 9:30 a.m., PARK COUNCIL OUTING to Redwood Reg. Park. Details later.

* The Eugene O'Neill National Historic Site Association is seeking more members. Application forms may be obtained from the association at P. O. Box 402, Danville, Calif. 94526.

* EBRPD has received a $250,000 federal grant in matching funds for development of Point Richmond Reg. Park.

* A Piedmont woman has been named chairman of the California State Park and Recreation Commission, succeeding L.A. TV executive Daniel Villanueva. Clarice E. Gilchrist, the new chief, was appointed to the commission in 1968.

* Violent confrontations in which several EBRPD rangers were injured and 12 persons arrested occurred on two weekends in Redwood Reg. Park. According to Anthony Souza, EBRPD Acting Chief of Public Safety, two "dissident youth groups: including some on motorcycles have taken over a complete section of the park. "Moreover," he added, they cruise up and down the park road "looking for action."

* Authorization to seek bids for the first-phase development of Shadow Cliffs Aquatic Park has been given by EBRPD. Contracts will be awarded May 4, and it is hoped the public will have limited use of the facility by July 15. Construction target is to have a portion of swimming beach and parking lots open by then.

* The lakeshore near the dam at Del Valle Reg. Park has been closed to public use. An EBRPD spokesman explained that the area has become a dangerous mess of litter and human wastes. Numerous garbage and litter fires have been started along the shores. The District expects at some future time to develop the dam area for limited use by fishermen.

* EBRPD directors have authorized "definitive discussions" with owners of 3,040 acres of land in the Nortonville-Somersville area, "looking toward ~~acquisition~~ of some of their land" for the proposed Coal Mines Reg. Park. EBRPD may be able to marshall as much as $900,000 for land ~~acquisition~~ and development of a park.

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PARK COUNCIL NEWS

VOL. 71 NO. 6 JUNE 1971

Newsletter of the Contra Costa Park Council, P.O. Box 4322, Walnut Creek, Calif., 94596
Editor: Patrick Whittle, 176 Waterman Circle, Danville, Calif., 94526, Telephone 837-3478
Artwork and Printing: Goldenberg, 727 Main St., Martinez, Calif., 94553, Telephone 228-1677

NEW PARK COUNCIL BOARD TAKES OFFICE

Park Council members elected a new slate of officers and directors at the annual dinner meeting held in Walnut Creek on May 7, as follows:

President: William S. (Bill) Dickinson, Concord (689-4474).
Vice-Presidents: Alvin A. Burton, Pleasant Hill (934-5716); Tom Crittenden, Antioch (754-3410); Manny Lindner, Danville (837-4444); Patrick Whittle, Danville (837-3478).
Recording Secretary: Katie Haubensak, Pleasant Hill (939-8608).
Corresponding Secretary: Marna Stansberry, Danville (837-4359).
Treasurer: John S. Gravell, Walnut Creek (937-3295).
Directors: Barbara Benedict, Martinez (228-2142); Art Bonwell, Concord (686-1151); Mary Bowerman, Lafayette (283-3403); Dave Harness, Martinez (228-8318); Jane Helrich, Concord (687-8873); Joann Johnson, Antioch (757-0494); Adah Kresge, Kensington (526-6282); Peggy Kovar, Walnut Creek (939-7637); Raydean Randlett, Danville (837-6852); Genevieve Sattler, Concord (685-5315); Sue Watson, Orinda (254-4077; Carl Weber, Orinda (254-8473).

NEWS TAKES A BREAK

Park Council News will not appear in July and August. Our next issue is due in September.

Meanwhile, the editor would be very pleased indeed to hear from people interested in writing for the News. This could be a good opportunity for high-school or junior-college students to gain journalistic experience and, perhaps, academic credits. Adult contributors would also be welcome.

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NEJEDLY STUDIES STATE PARKS

Sen. John A. Nejedly (R-Walnut Creek) has announced that the Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Wildlife, of which he is chairman, will soon begin to review the practices and policies of the California Dept. of Parks and Recreation and the State Park and Recreation Commission.

The investigation has been triggered by "unrelated and specific concerns" expressed by several members of the senate as to the way the department and the commission have been functioning.

BIKE TRAILS MAKE MORE NEWS

Both Southern Pacific and EBRPD are currently studying the Park Council proposal for a 47-mile bicycle path to follow the SP right-of-way from Pleasanton to Pinole via Martinez.

A committee representing the Park Council and the Alamo-Danville Jr. Women's Club recently conferred with top officials of the railway company in San Francisco. Lois Mitchell, speaking for the women's group, recommended establishment of a 7.5 mile section from Greenbrook Drive, Danville, to Rudgear Road, Walnut Creek, as a first step. This section includes an existing 0.6-mile path constructed in 1960 between Camille and La Serena Avenues, Alamo, for the convenience and safety of children attending Rancho Romero School.

The Danville-Walnut Creek section alone would give safe access by foot and bicycle to six schools, a public library, several churches, and the new San Ramon Valley community center, as well as most stores in the valley. At present, the only through route suitable for bicycles is the highway known as Danville Blvd. and San Ramon Valley Blvd. The highway is used by thousands of automobiles and trucks a day at speeds of 50-70 mph and has already claimed the lives of several children.

EBRPD directors on April 20 authorized their staff to study the 47-mile route and report within six months.

Other bikeway proposals now being considered by Contra Costa cities include one along Willow Pass Road in Concord and another along San Ramon Creek between Newell Avenue and Rudgear Road in Walnut Creek.

The San Ramon Creek proposal is the subject of an energetic campaign spearheaded by Robert J. Canning, of 45 Simpson Drive, Walnut Creek.

"How would you like an open parkway for walking or bicycling from Newell Avenue to Rudgear?" he asks. It would be "a broad, landscaped walkway free from motorized vehicles or commercialism where you can stroll among old oak trees, a miniparkway that can almost entirely be financed by federal funds."

Two main alternatives are under consideration. One would be a conventional "open concrete atrocity" replacing today's beautiful trees and shrugs; the other would be a concrete box. The top of the box would be usable as Canning's bikeway, or as the base for various commercial developments, or as a parking lot.

The Contra Costa Park Council, formerly the Contra Costa Park and Recreation Council, is a non-profit organization incorporated under the laws of the State of California. The Park Council is dedicated to fostering the natural beauty of the county, preserving open space, and providing adequate opportunity for healthful recreation. Contributions are tax-deductible.
President: William S. Dickinson, Jr., 4261 Brentwood Circle, Concord, California, Telephone 689-4474.

HILL SCALPING VETOED

The first step in stopping all grading of Walnut Creek's hillside areas for at least one year has been taken by the city planning commission on a split vote, according to Contra Costa Times.

With all commissioners except chairman Herbert W. Martin present, the group voted 4-2 to recommend to the city council the proposal by Commissioner James D. Hill for a moratorium prohibiting all grading and earth moving and further prohibiting the issuance of building permits on any land having an elevation of 300 feet above sea level and on land at any elevation having an average slope of 15 per cent or more.

HELP WANTED ON LAS TRAMPAS TRAIL - BLAZING

June 12 has been set as the date on which a trail will be made for hikers and horsemen on Las Trampas Ridge. The cutting is to be supervised by EBRPD staff and Mr. Gard Forester of the East Bay Chapter, Sierra Club. The trail is proposed to run from the end of Bolinger Canyon Road toward Danville and the ridgetop. The clearing, at most four feet wide, will be conducted so that erosion and the impact on chaparral wildlife will be held to an absolute minimum. At the ridgetop, the trail will turn south to connect with the fire trail on the Star View site. Mechanized vehicles will be prohibited.

Organizers ask for the assistance of county-wide organizations in building the trail. It has been extimated that if two or three individuals volunteered from each trail club and conservation organization in the area, the trail could be completed in one day. Those interested in helping on June 12 should call Manny Lindner, 837-4444.

The trail plans also include a hikers-only trail to run the full length of the ridgetop on EBRPD land, to connect the trails already existing on the Nordstrom and Star View sites. When possible, existing deer trails will be used so as to disturb the ecology as little as possible. This project will probably be undertaken at a later date.

HIKES TO MORGAN TERRITORY AND BLACKHAWK RIDGE BIG SUCCESSES

About forty outdoorsmen were treated to a spectacular display of spring wildflowers in the meadows and glades of a secluded ranch in the Morgan Territory area. With near-perfect weather and no hills to climb, participants enjoyed unusual vistas of Mt. Diablo in springtime seldom seen by the hiker.

An estimated seventy hikers thrilled to somewhat different scenery when they ascended Blackhawk Ridge about a mile east of the South Entrance to Mt. Diablo State Park. The hike, which began on the Blackhawk Ranch, provided a rare opportunity to see one of the last of the big functioning ranches in the area.

To those who attended both of these hikes, it was obvious that Contra Costa County still has a few wonderful scenic surprises for those who love her hills and her meadows, her ridges and her canyons. If you missed these gems, better luck next year!

----------Manny Lindner

O'NEILL HOME LAS TRAMPAS ADVANCES

A significant step towards eventual acquisition of the Eugene O'Neill Home in Danville has been announced by Congressman Jerome R. Waldie (D-Antioch).

The O'Neill Home has been entered into the National Register of Historic Places by the National Parks Service.

"Entry into the National Register is a requirement needed by a site in order to be acquired by the Park Service," Waldie said. "This action by the Park Service will greatly assist my bill to acquire the O'Neill Home and Las Trampas Ridge, and I am delighted."

Senators Cranston and Tunney have introduced identical Las Trampas - O'Neill House bills in the United States Senate.

The news item above was received from Congressman Waldie's office. Manny Lindner, Las Trampas Committee Chairman of the Park Council, commented: "Let us hope that this is, at long last, the breakthrough for which we have all been hoping. Write Congressman Waldie and Senators Cranston and Tunney, letting them know how pleased you are."

Further news of this critically important matter came in a Contra Costa Times report. According to the report, Mike Towle, of Towle and Associates Realtors, Walnut Creek, said that the historic home and 1,013-acre site appear to be nearing a sale. The property has been listed in state and national publications, with ads emphasizing its historical significance.

Towle said that "the modest price of $1.8 million was determined in order that a buyer could better afford to hold onto the house, rather than feel forced to raze the building and sell to a developer." He added that all interested buyers have indicated a desire to preserve the house.

Title to the property, he explained, is in the hands of Corduroy Hills, representing a group of investors of which he is chairman. He said the joint owners "can't afford it any longer, and we are trying to avoid sale to a developer."

KNOX REGIONAL GOVERNMENT BILL STALLED

Assemblyman Knox's AB1057 has come up against an unexpected snag. The bill would create a Conservation and Development Agency with power to ensure the preservation of a beautiful Bay Area environment by appropriate regulation of such factors as land use, solid waste disposal, and transportation.

AB1057 is backed by the Park Council, the Sierra Club, the Bay Area Council, the League of Women Voters, AAUW, People for Open Space, other organizations, and many individuals. It is opposed by ABAG, the League of California Cities, and the County Supervisors Association.

Supporters say that AB1057 is desperately needed to halt urban sprawl, secure open space, and turn back the tide of pollution. Opponents want power to remain in local hands--which, unfortunately, have not demonstrated an ability to tackle the problems successfully.

The unexpected snag encountered by Knox was the absence of several members of the Assembly Committee on Local Government. With not enough votes for a "do pass," he had to request that the bill be taken under advisement.

Anyone wishing to help passage of AB1057 should write at once to the four opposing members of the committee: Assemblyman Richard D. Hayden, Ken MacDonald, Carley V. Porter, and Newton R. Russell. The address of each is "State Capitol, Sacramento 95814."

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Editor:

When does no mean yes, or perhaps maybe? When the County is talking about a road through Bolinger Canyon and Las Trampas Regional Park, that's when.

Last year, as an outgrowth of a futile protest movement by conservationists against industrialization in the Bolinger area, the County plans for a four-lane highway from Rheem to the San Ramon area, traversing both Bolinger and the EBRPD land in Las Trampas Wilderness Park, were questioned. As a result of the debate, the County Planner agreed to set up a meeting with conservationists representing different groups from different parts of the County. On July 17, 1970, a meeting was held in Martinez, attended by County Planning Dept. and Public Works personnel and by a representative of the State Division of Highways. Those present heard the spokesman from Public Works state flatly that the county had lost interest in such a road connecting Rheem and San Ramon, both because of construction difficulties and because of a shortage of funds. However, both county and state spokesmen said that the State still was interested in a road which would ultimately run from the Sheperd Canyon freeway, crossing Las Trampas just south of Rossmoor. End of meeting.

End of Bolinger four-lane highway? Not quite. In a remarkable bit of collecting and piecing-together of correspondences on the subject, Mr. Maynard Munger of the Bolinger Canyon Improvement Association has assembled a list of documents showing that on August 14, the County Director of Public Works wrote that "Bolinger Canyon Road is shown on the General Plan...to link San Ramon and Moraga areas, and to provide access to the Las Trampas Regional Park." Reinforcing this, the writer further stated that "we must not lose sight of the fact that, in addition to being a major connecting highway, the road will provide access to the Las Trampas Regional Park and thus allow enjoyment of the park facilities by a larger number of people than would be permitted without a road."

It sounds very much as though the County is talking out of both sides of its mouth. At least one park planner once stated that Las Trampas would make an ideal wilderness regional park, but if a through road were ever permitted in Bolinger Canyon, "that would be the end of the wilderness area, you could forget the whole thing."

What are we to believe? What is the County's official stand? Is it "no" or "yes"? Or "maybe"? We have the makings of an incomparable wilderness park in Las Trampas. Indeed, it is for everyone's enjoyment, but are we to sacrifice its outstanding wilderness asset for the sake of convenience, by cutting off ten or fifteen miles of driving, thereby saving the park wilderness seeker ten or fifteen minutes of access time?

Where do things stand as of this date? It is reliably reported that the Director of Public Works still wants that road through Bolinger Canyon. Those of you who have been to Las Trampas Park via the end of the present Bolinger Canyon Road can easily get the picture as you look across to Rocky Ridge. Instead of deer or cattle, it will be autos, trucks, and smog. Irresponsible prattle? Judge for yourself. If you want to keep Las Trampas a wilderness park, I suggest you write to both the County Administrator (Mr. J. P. McBrien) and to the County Director of Public Works, Mr. Victor W. Sauer.

----------Manny Lindner,
Danville

(Park Council News asked Vernon L. Cline, Deputy Puplic Works Director, to comment. He said the County is obliged to provide road access to approved subdivisions. However, it would not try to put a road through Las Trampas Reg. Park against the wishes of EBRPD. ----Editor.)

Editor:

The Park Council Newsletter for May carried a brief news item re violent confrontations with dissident "youth groups" who periodically take over a part of Redwood Regional Park (on p. 4).

But no mention of the similar activities in Briones (e.g., on March 7th and April 18th). In view of the chest-thumping and roaring about the P. G. &E. wires "away up there on top of the ridge", shouldn't the local clam chowder and tea & crumpets groups take up their arms and do some thumping down "where the action is"?

Seriously ---- I've been amazed at the contrast between the almost hysterical chatter and the tittering about things like the P. G. & E. wires (on one hand), and the complete (?) absence of campaigns to maintain a quiet peaceful atmosphere, one in which a person might stand and contemplate those wire-less hills.

If such peace campaigns were conducted I'm sure that the efforts to add to the parks, via increased taxes, would be better received by the tax-paying public.

----------T. J. Nelson
Lafayette

OPPOSITION GROWS TO ALAMO FREEWAY

A proposed highway through Alamo is being opposed by San Ramon Valley residents. Alternate 21 would run from Burton Valley in Lafayette, through Alamo to the vicinity of Miranda Avenue, and thence northward. This link with the future Shepherd Canyon Freeway had previously drawn fire from the Park Council because the road would cut into the Rossmoor end of Las Trampas Ridge.

Speaking at a San Ramon Valley Liaison Committee meeting, county planning commissioner Andrew Young said, "It's my feeling that this route doesn't solve the problem" of relieving traffic flow through the central county. Another critic said it would offer nothing better than a nice "Sunday drive" because of its remoteness to the populated areas of the county.

Hal Taylor, route planner for the Division of Highways, explained that the state has not approved either Alt. 21 or Alt. 20, which would loop through Pleasant Hill. The Division is waiting for expressions of public sentiment on the two.

CONSERVATION CAPSULES

* Lafayette planning commission has approved a new recycling center to be located on a vacant lot near Louis Store, Mt. Diablo Blvd. Drever, McIntosh & Co., owners of the lot, are allowing its use rent-free.

* The State Water Resources Control Board has proposed establishment of a super-governmental regulatory agency with power to dictate water quality standards to nine Bay Area counties that discharge into S. F. Bay. Justification would be to coordinate waste water discharges that continue to detract from Bay water quality, especially off Contra Costa County and in the south of the Bay. A bill to create the agency has been introduced by Assemblyman John Knox (D-Richmond).

* Teams of youthful volunteers will keep Lafayette clean on a perpetual basis if a new idea catches on. The idea first started during class discussion at Acalanes High School and is now being tested. Cleaning up litter is only one part of the proposal. Long-term plans would include environmental improvement, aided by supervised gardening instruction. Call Councilman Robert Fisher (283-0103) or Gloria Duffy (939-0771) for details.

* Preferred treatment for car pools will be tried this fall on the Bay Bridge. For a one-month period, cars with three or more passengers will be allowed to use the special lane now restricted to commute buses. This lane saves bus commuters several minutes a day by permitting them to bypass the huge traffic jams at the toll booths. Want to join a pool? Call Ralph Richards, of Berkeley, at 845-1769.

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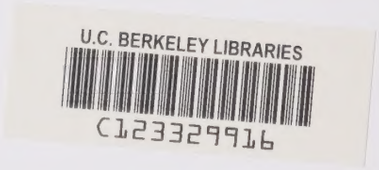

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